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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Talabani Urges Ankara to Declare PKK Amnesty - Hurriyet
Sunni al-Anbar Province Rejects Iraq Constitution - Hurriyet
Iraq Constitution's Fate Depends on Mosul Votes - Milliyet
Journalists' Hotel Bombed in Baghdad: 20 Killed - Hurriyet
Haaretz: Hamas Militants Trained in Istanbul - Sabah
Bernanke the New Boss for US Dollar - Sabah
Dowd: Miller Went to Jail for Fame - Aksam
Hurricane Wilma Pounds Florida Shores - Turkiye
Wilma Spares US, Kills 13 in Haiti - Posta

OPINION MAKERS

McEldowney: The US Does Not Meet with Terrorists - Zaman
Talabani: Barzani's Visit A Recognition of Kurdish Identity - Radikal
Talabani Calls for Amnesty for PKK - Yeni Safak
One Million Syrians Rally to Protest UN Hariri Report - Yeni Safak
Syrians: We Won't Become Another Iraq - Cumhuriyet
'Revolution' Unlike in Azerbaijan - Cumhuriyet
Wolfensohn Blames Israel for Cutting Talks with Palestinians - Cumhuriyet
Israel Kills Islamic Jihad Commander Saadi - Yeni Safak
Miller Quake Jolts The New York Times - Radikal

BRIEFING

McEldowney: US Doesn't Meet with Terrorists: US Charge d'Affaires Nancy McEldowney denied weekend press reports claiming that American officials had met with members of the outlawed PKK in northern Iraq: 'The US government does not meet and will not meet or will meet with terrorists,' McEldowney said. 'The US, a true friend and ally of Turkey, backed Ankara in dealing with problems including the fight against the PKK,' she continued. 'President Bush and US government representatives are urging Iraqi officials to work in cooperation with the US and Turkey to put an end to the terrorist activities of the PKK,' McEldowney said during a visit to a charity bazaar set up by the Altindag Municipality in Ankara in an effort to help the needy during Ramadan.

NSC Lists Terrorism as Primary Threat to Turkey: Turkey's National Security Council (NSC) reached agreement on the National Security Policy document at its regular meeting on Monday, papers report. The new National Security Policy Document will be decisive in shaping Turkey's internal and external security policies. The document lists separatist, fundamentalist, and radical leftist movements as 'primary domestic threats.' The NSC had postponed discussing the document during two previous meetings, when military members of the Council expressed concerns about several parts of the draft. The National Security Policy Document, seen by some analysts as the 'secret constitution' of Turkey, will be submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval. The NSC also discussed Turkey's EU drive, and stressed in the statement issued after the meeting the importance of the protection of Turkey's national interests during the accession process. The Council also raised the need for effective use of the country's water resources, and advised that construction of new dams on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers should be completed as soon as possible.

EU to Ask Turkey to Open Ports to Greek Cypriots: The European Union will ask Turkey in the Accession Partnership Document to be issued on November 9 to open its ports and airports to Greek Cypriot aircraft and vessels and normalize ties with Nicosia, papers report. Turkey earlier proposed a simultaneous lifting of sanctions imposed on the Turkish and Greek parts of Cyprus. The EU blueprint will also urge

Turkey to seek ratification of the customs union protocol in the parliament.

EU Report Lists Shortcomings in Turkey's EU Drive: A monthly report released by the EU Commission draws attention to escalating terrorism in Turkey, and says that the growing violence may have been manipulated by opponents of reform in the military and the police, "Cumhuriyet" reports. The EU Commission report notes that heated debates between Kurdish activists and Turkish nationalists are adding to tensions. The report says that rising violence has strengthened the position of hardliners in the country, who are now advocating tough anti-terror measures. Nationalism is on the rise in Turkey and political tensions are mounting, the report claims, adding that the bureaucracy's continued support for the status quo will cause serious trouble for the Turkish government during the EU accession process. The report warns that the government has not met EU expectations with regard to constitutional reforms, and draws attention to differences in police treatment of Kurdish activists and Islamist demonstrators.

Talat in Ankara Before Flying to US; Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat is due to visit Ankara to meet with Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul before leaving for the US on Wednesday, where he will be received by Secretary of State Rice in Washington. While in the US, Talat will also meet with former US Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas Weston, UNSYD Kofi Annan, and UNDP Administrator Kemal Dervis. Talat is scheduled to meet Congressman Henry Hyde, the Republican head of the US House International Relations Committee, and other key committee members. He will address an event to be held jointly by the Brookings Institution and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), two Washington-based think tanks.

Dissident Kurdish Activist Killed by the PKK: Dailies report that Veysi Akgonul, a Patriotic Democratic Party (PWD) member detained in connection with the murder of Kurdish politician Hikmet Fidan in July, has admitted that he and several colleagues handed Fidan over to the PKK after he rejected pressure from the terrorist organization to leave the PWD, a dissident Kurdish political grouping founded by PKK defectors led by Osman Ocalan. The PKK reportedly had ordered Fidan to join the Democratic Society Movement, led by former Kurdish parliamentarian Leyla Zana. Another suspect in the case, Firat Karahan, said that Fidan had been murdered to silence PWD activities in Diyarbakir. 'Following the murder, Osman Ocalan decided to leave the PWD,' Karahan said. Papers say that Fidan's killer had been identified, and was now hiding in rural areas of Diyarbakir with other PKK militants.

New Kurdish Party to be Founded: The Democratic Society Movement (DTH), formed by former DEP lawmakers Leyla Zana and her colleagues, is preparing to launch itself as a political party named the Democratic Society Party (DTP) during the movement's two-day meeting in Ankara this week. Former Kurdish lawmaker Selim Sadak said that during Turkey's EU accession process, basic rights such as freedom of expression will be strengthened, and that the Kurdish problem will be solved within a democratic atmosphere created by the EU. Sadak urged the EU not to allow Turkey's membership process to advance before the Kurdish problem is resolved, and said that the process must not be solely focused on economic issues. Papers say that legal restrictions prevented Leyla Zana from becoming the official party leader, and that another former Kurdish parliamentarian, Ahmet Turk, and Abdullah Ocalan's lawyer, Aysel Tugluk, will co-chair the DTP.

Trial of 4 Policeman for Southeast Killings Begins in Eskisehir: The trial of 4 policemen charged in the shooting deaths of a Kurdish man and his 12-year-old son in the southeastern city of Kiziltepe (Mardin) earlier this year got underway yesterday in Eskisehir under tight security. 12 people were detained in skirmishes outside the courthouse, and lawyers for the victims' family walked out of the courtroom to protest what they termed the 'oppressive atmosphere' of the hearing. The defendants claim that the victims were armed at time they were shot, but several human rights groups who later visited Kiziltepe cast doubt on that assertion. The trial will continue in December.

Reinhard on the Image Problem of US: Keith Reinhard, the President of the global advertising giant DDB Worldwide, said the image problem of the United States has reached an 'alarming' level. Reinhard, in Istanbul for the anniversary of a DDB Worldwide partnership with a Turkish company, told the press that Australia, Canada, the UK, and Germany have surpassed the United States as a destination country for a bright future. Reinhard said the US loses billions of dollars every year from students shifting to Canada or the UK due to hardships in obtaining US visas. 'In Germany, a close US ally for many years,' Reinhard said, 'European brands are preferred over American ones, and even 37 percent of British intellectuals say they will not buy

American brands.' A column in "Hurriyet" says that few US Senators had been interested in Reinhard's views when he addressed the Congress as head of Business for Diplomatic Action (BDA). Reinhard now has the tough task of making the Bush Administration acknowledge that the US has an image problem before he begins 'educating' ordinary Americans. Reinhard said he told the Congress that McDonald's and Coca-Cola have spent 2.4 billion USD on their image last year, much more than the US Government spent to win friends around the world.

Pope Benedict to Visit Turkey in 2006: Pope Benedict XVI has accepted Ankara's invitation to visit Ankara and Istanbul in 2006, papers report. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate had earlier invited the Pope to attend the St. Andrew's Feast Day on November 30 in Istanbul, but Ankara advised the Vatican to schedule the visit for 2006 in a maneuver to prevent participation by the Pontiff in the St. Andrews' services. The visit, during which Pope Benedict XVI will meet with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, is seen as a significant effort by Christians to boost dialogue among churches. By allowing such a dialogue, Ankara aims at toning down the Vatican's opposition to Turkey's EU membership.

Hijaz Railway Project: Minister of Transportation Binali Yildirim told a ceremony on the 100th anniversary of the Hijaz Railway at Haifa Eastern Train Station in Israel that Turkey is ready to join efforts to reactivate the railroad, which was destroyed during World War I, the semi-official Anatolian News Agency reported yesterday. The Hijaz Railway operated between Haifa and Damascus, and work continues to renew the route all the way to Saudi Arabia. Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav also asked Yildirim to ensure direct flights between Haifa and Turkey.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Syria

"Before the Syrian Crisis Grows" Sami Kohen commented in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (10/25): "The international community's efforts to exert pressure on Syria will have an impact on relations between Ankara and Damascus as well. Things might become difficult for Ankara, as its bilateral relationship with Syria reached a significant phase during the last two years. Turkey continued its rapprochement with Syria even when the US was pressuring the Assad regime. . The involvement of the United Nations in the Syrian issue and the new process toward Damascus are incompatible with Turkish diplomacy's wish to develop bilateral ties with Syria and to remain in step with the international political consensus. . In fact Turkey, by using its special status in the region, can play a role to minimize the potential impact of the Syrian crisis. Turkey is capable of giving conciliation messages to both the Assad regime and the international community, and by doing so lowering tension in the region. Turkey's message to Assad could address several topics, including that the regime must take the UN stance seriously and not defy the international community, and that it must end support for militant groups and insurgents and accelerate the domestic reform process. Turkey's message to President Bush and the West in general could include the need to avoid taking any military action, not being so harsh on Assad, being patient by using diplomatic measures, and being careful about the possible backlash of economic sanctions against Syria. The time is perfect for Turkey to check the atmosphere for a diplomatic initiative like this."

"The Hariri Report"

Yilmaz Oztuna commented in the conservative-nationalist "Turkiye" (10/25): "The ruling Baath party organized demonstrations in several Syrian cities yesterday to protest the UN report, but this will only strengthen the US thesis. Syria will not bow its head easily. But many countries, including Turkey, are examining the report carefully. Secretary Rice stated that in the 21st century,

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assassinations take place only in places where there are anti-democratic regimes. This statement echoes the tone of the US mission to bring democracy to Syria after Afghanistan and Iraq. Washington wants to coordinate with London, Israel, and possibly even Ankara to carry out this mission. If Ankara acts against the principles of the strategic partnership and remains aloof from the US initiative, then the US will take Armenia and Kurdistan as its partners."

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